IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please amend the Abstract of Disclosure as follows:

~~The present invention provides a picture coding method for predictively coding a picture with reference to a picture obtained from pictures which are coded and decoded; performing filtering processing on a decoded picture; storing a filtered picture in a memory as a reference picture, out of two pictures: a filtered picture and an unfiltered picture, said filtered picture being a filtered decoded picture and said unfiltered picture being the decoded picture; and storing an unfiltered picture in the memory as a picture for output out of the two pictures.~~

<u>A method and apparatus for decoding a picture included in a bitstream. The decoded picture can be filtered to output a filtered picture. An extracting unit extracts filtering application information from the bitstream to indicate on a picture by picture basis which one of the decoded pictures before the filtering process and after the filtering process is to be output for display purposes. A storing unit stores decoded pictures after the filtering process. A display picture output unit can display either the decoded picture before the filtering process or after the filtering process in response to the filter application information.</u>